

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 14**  
**INCIDENT NO. 97-003**  
**DATE: January 25, 1997      TIME: 12:00 p.m.**

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Winter storms and blizzard conditions statewide.
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: A motorist received minor injuries during one of eight Stutsman County accidents attributed to the January 22 blizzard.
3. DAMAGES: North Dakota remains in the grips of an Arctic front, resulting in a wind chill advisory for January 25. Bitter cold wind chills range from 40 to 60 below in the south and east and 30 to 45 below in the northwest. The North Dakota Road Report indicates that many highways have heavy snow drifts or snow cover, reducing some roadways to one lane and causing snow fog.

School officials for many eastern North Dakota schools either delayed or canceled classes because of the January 24 storm. Winter storms have forced some schools to cancel classes as many as nine days.

Storm conditions on January 24 required the N.D. National Guard to postpone snow removal missions in Barnes, Dickey, Griggs, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Sargent, Steele and Stutsman Counties.

Arctic temperatures caused the city of Elgin's water tank to freeze, resulting in equipment failure and a leak. Damages to city property are estimated as high as \$25,000.

The Ransom County Sheriff reported that weather-related cancellations of Drivers License renewal and testing appointments have residents worried that their licenses may not be renewed by their expiration dates.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor Schafer and Roger Free, Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), signed the FEMA-State Agreement on January 24. This agreement defines the scope of work and reimbursement procedures.

Emergency access to all North Dakotans remains a priority of county and state snow removal efforts. With the exception of Grant County, access has been achieved in the southwest quarter of the state. The northwest quarter of the state, the area least impacted by storms, also has 100 percent emergency access. However, eastern North Dakota still struggles to obtain access to residents. In the southeastern and northeastern quadrants, access ranges from 5 percent in Grand Forks County to 100 percent in Stutsman County, depending on the severity of blizzards occurring during the past few days. Most counties in this region average 50 percent emergency access to all residents.

The N.D. National Guard has completed 21 snow removal missions since operations began on January 13, the day after North Dakota received a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration for the winter storms. Additionally, the National Guard has 26 missions underway and is tracking five N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) missions. The National Guard's 26 missions are located in the following 16 counties: Barnes, Dickey, Eddy, Emmons, Foster, Grant, Griggs, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Nelson, Richland, Sargent, Sioux, and Stutsman Counties. Of the missions, seven are staffed by U.S. Air Force personnel. Five of the National Guard missions operate around the clock in Barnes, Dickey, Eddy and Foster Counties. Staffing requirements for all 31 missions are as follows: 101 Army Guard, 17 Air Guard, 24 Air Force and five N.D. DOT personnel. Equipment in use includes: 28 dozers, 15 snow blowers, 28 tractor-trailers, 25 support vehicles, 15 dump trucks, eight loaders and one grader. National Guard personnel expect the missions to continue at least until the end of January, based on additional support requests, operator fatigue and weather conditions.

All available N.D. DOT crews continue snow removal efforts on state transportation systems. Snow removal crews have become tired because of extended hours of operation. The N.D. DOT has compiled a list of relief snow plow operators from western district offices, as well as retirees and other N.D. DOT personnel assets qualified to operate snow removal equipment. The Bismarck and Fargo Districts have also initiated contracts for dozer assets to clear roadway segments adjacent to state highways, where large drifts remain.

Members of Minot Air Force Base's Civil Engineering Group are touring sites in McIntosh, Sioux and Sargent Counties, where U.S. Air Force personnel are assisting with snow removal efforts. The group visited the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on January 24. Of the four Minot Air Force Base missions underway, the Sargent County crew is scheduled to move to Dickey County on January 25. Minot Air Force Base and Grand Forks Air Force Base each have four snow blowers assigned to snow removal efforts.

A Sheridan County farmer used a tractor to dislodge a school bus from a snow drift on January 23. The school bus had 10 children aboard at the time of the incident.

In Walsh County, a farmer rescued a motorist who had been trapped in her car for eight hours during the January 21 blizzard.

The Sargent Central School District has requested that students bring a sleeping bag, pillow and extra clothing in the event adverse weather conditions prevent rural students from returning home. North Sargent School District officials are designating storm homes for rural students.

The Cass County Emergency Manager will be assisting a London-based production company developing a

video on nature's storms for the Discovery Channel. The film crew will be videotaping conditions in the Dakotas and interviewing emergency personnel who assisted with rescue efforts.

The cities of Antler, Bottineau, Elliot, Fort Ransom, Garrison, Lansford, Lisbon, Max, Maxbass, Newbury, Sheldon, Souris, Westhope, Willow City and Wilton have issued emergency or disaster declarations. Since the storms began, 52 counties, 45 cities and three Indian Reservations have issued declarations.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: No Situation Report will be issued January 26. The next Situation Report will be distributed January 27.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports and photos of snow removal efforts are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

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Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director